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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed to provide teacher trainers with ideas and resources for preparing preservice teachers to effectively teach at-risk students. Based on case studies, the booklet provides a framework for fostering a more structured contact between at-risk students and teacher trainees. The first section profiles 12 case studies describing dilemmas that teachers, administrators, and drop-out coordinators face daily; these are problems without clear answers. The second section details activities that identify and deal with controversial issues concerning at-risk students. Following this is a section of resources published between 1988 and 1990 and dealing with the topic of at-risk students under the categories of books, case study methodology books, journals, guides and reports, and miscellaneous resources. The last section briefly describes model programs carried out through collaborations between colleges and universities and public school systems. (ALL)

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TEACHING THE At Risk STUDENT

A GUIDE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

• Case Studies • Resources

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TEACHING THE AT-RISK STUDENT

A Guide for Teacher Educators

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook grew out of a series of meetings by a task force jointly sponsored by VACTE and AEL on teaching the at-risk student. One outcome of this 18 month process was identification of the need of a document that might provide teacher trainers with ideas and resources related to preparing preservice teachers to deal effectively with at-risk students.

At that point, the Commonwealth Center for the Education of Teachers funded a mini-grant to produce such a document. Over the course of the last 12 months we have attempted to pull together, and organize, a heterogenous pool of knowledge and resources relating to teacher preparation and at-risk students. The goal of this handbook is to assist the teacher trainer in providing instruction and experiences to preservice teachers that are relevant for their future work with at-risk students.

Three assumptions have guided our work. First, there is no single way to address the needs of at-risk children in the schools, and any preparation of teachers must focus not on a cookbook of techniques but on fostering sensitivity, awareness, problem-solving and the capacity to handle complex emotional and cognitive tasks. Second, data suggests a need for increased structured contact between at-risk students and teacher trainees. Therefore we assume that this handbook should have a case-based focus or theme. That is, one objective of this handbook is to provide a framework, based on the use of case studies, for fostering such contact. Finally we recognize that this document is very incomplete. The materials presented are by no means exhaustive. In fact we see the production of this document as the first step in a process of continued revision and expansion. In light of this we apologize for omissions and invite and welcome any additions to the handbook. Also, space has been provided throughout the handbook to encourage its users to add resources and or techniques that they have discovered to be helpful in relating to this topic.

CASE PROFILES

The reality of dealing with at-risk students is that there are no pat answers - no 1, 2, 3, 4 steps to be followed. In fact, there are sometimes more questions raised than answers found. How can preservice teachers best be prepared for that reality? What teaching method will provide them the reflective, critical thinking and problem solving skills they will need in the classroom?

Following are a collection of 10 case stories or profiles gathered from the Shenandoah Valley and surrounding districts in Virginia, plus 2 case studies used by permission from the book, When I Was Young I Loved School. Teachers, administrators, and drop-out coordinators have submitted the cases. They have described the dilemmas that they face daily - problems without clear answers. We chose to do little editing of the cases to preserve the uniqueness of each writer's perspective. We encourage classroom instructors to use the various teacher perspectives or biases as an additional springboard for discussion.

CASE PROFILE NO. 1

"I Got Nobody"_____BRIAN

"My name is Brian . . . but people call me lots of other things. . . a felon, an 18 year old ninth grader, freak, an attendance problem, emotionally disturbed, a behavior problem, unemployed, poor, angry, confused. My mom left me and my sister, Candy, when I was two. We've lived with my grandma ever since. Candy is grandma's reason for living. I ain't nothing to grandma. My sister is in the hospital again for her brain tumor . . . she ain't gonna make it this time. By the way, my mom and her boyfriend dropped into the house out of the blue. I guess she's movin' to Nebraska and we don't even know if Candy is gonna make it! Where is Nebraska? Grandma called the county detective today to git me kicked out. He told her he'd come git me anytime she called him. . ."

"The detective called again last night to find out where I was Sunday night . . . somebody's messing around at the elementary school and he thinks it was me. I didn't do none of that! Why can't everybody just leave me alone. . . I done paid my dues! I was already charged for the things I done. I got back the cars I stole and I'm trying to pay the rest of them people off. That's all the judge said I had to do! Which reminds me, I done lost that list of the people I have to pay back. I gotta call my lawyer for a new list. I can't even begin to pay them people if I can't get no job! Nobody'll hire me. . . Pretty soon my two years of parole are gonna be up and I won't have paid nobody and they'll lock me up. The detective is on me about some new "things". Trouble is, I can't remember what I done and what I didn't do. I was drunk and everything is hazy. . ."

"I was only in school three out of the last thirty days so they dropped my name from school. I went back the other day and signed them papers to come back in. I was only there one day and then I got into some more bad things that same night. I can't hardly keep myself together in school and then when I git home, something comes over me. I just can't control this "thing." I don't know what it is. . . I'm just bad. I never had a chance. I don't know any other way. I go to school and my resource teacher tries to help me git caught up and I just sit there. I hate myself."

"I'm gonna fail the ninth grade again. I ain't comin' back again. I can't pass the GED. My resource teacher says I can learn anything in fifteen minutes. Trouble is I haven't been in school so I never learned the stuff I need to know to pass the GED. I tried the GED program at the technical school. That didn't work neither. I can't handle being penned up in a place. Everybody thinks I'm bad and a failure anyway. Something inside just takes over and I gotta git out."

"I got nobody. I don't trust nobody. I just gotta survive, but I don't know what I'm gonna do. My name is Brian and I ain't got nothing. . ."

1. *Identify the past and present causes of Brian's poor self-image.*

2. *What do you suppose were early symptoms of Brian's negative self-image? With early detection, what could the school have done, beginning with grade one, to improve Brian's chances for success?*

3. *Note the reinforcing and conflicting relationships between self-image and the expectations of others (peers, parents, siblings, teachers, law officers, etc.)*

4. *What kinds of educational experiences would you propose to help Brian break out of his present self-defeating cycle?*

5. *Do you find this case story hard to believe? If so, what in your life experience causes you to doubt the validity of this story?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 2

"No Use Trying"_____CARRIE

"I can't write in this stupid journal! Mrs. Jarvis wants us to write a dumb entry on "I Am . . . " I am Carrie Schmidt. That's stupid! Nobody cares who I am! My mom doesn't care. If she did, she wouldn't spend the last few dollars on dresses for herself instead of on groceries. I always have to make dinner for myself. We don't even have any milk, fruit, vegetables, cereal or meat. She got laid off her job over 6 months ago and then quit. She isn't even looking for a new one. She always says she doesn't feel good."

"Everybody hates me! Big, old dumb, ugly, fat Carrie! Mom takes out all of her troubles on me. Why did my sister, Kim, get to live with Grandma? Davey and Jeff come home every once in a while. But I'm scared of my own brothers! I can't get the picture out of my mind . . . I still remember when they pinned me down in the basement and brought that blow torch . . . I was so scared. They just laughed; I'm just a toy to beat around."

"So there! My name is Carrie. I weigh at least 200 pounds and everyone hates me. They all blame me. I can't wear those stupid shorts in PE even though my teacher says they are the biggest he has. I hear kids laugh all the time and they sniff the air when I go by. Mom won't do laundry so I have to walk to the laundromat to do clothes if I want my only pair of jeans to be clean."

"I just can't do it anymore. I can't get out of bed. . . I never feel good. I hate school. School hates me. I missed at least 15 of the 30 days last grading period. I got a 9% average in Geography. Why even bother? I doubt I'll ever graduate. What does it matter? Mom can't make me get out of bed. Why should I? She never does anything but lay around the house and eat!"

"I tried to tell a teacher that we didn't have any food in the house. She called the Protective place. They said they won't come to see. Last time they came, Mom managed to find a big fat chicken to cook. The county nurse came to the house one day. I didn't want her to see the mess so I went to the church and borrowed things to clean. I stayed up until 1:00 to do it."

"Before my sister moved out, I had to sleep in the basement on a cot. There was an inch or more of water on the floor so it got real cold in the winter . . . how long do I have to live like this?"

1. *Imagine <u>you</u> are Carrie's teacher. What might be your personal feelings/responses to her journal?*

2. *What would you identify as her needs in addition to educational ones?*

3. *What are the community resources available to help meet those needs?*

4. *Do you have enough information? If not, how could you obtain more?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 3

"Getting It Together" GEORGE

George is a 16-year-old ninth grade repeater. The 1989-90 school year is the second time in his life that he's been retained. George comes from a broken home. He now lives with his father and stepmother, along with one older brother. George's father is an over-the-road truck driver, and is only home every other weekend. George's Mom works part-time, and is very protective of George, trying to provide an adult figure to lean on, yet is quick to give in to George's wants and desires. George's brother is four years older, and has been in jail twice in his life. The brother was thrown out of one school system for a confrontation with a teacher as a culminating offense, and dropped out of a second school during the ninth grade at the age of 18. No one in George's immediate family has finished the ninth grade.

George's friends and he have similar experiences. George and his friends are deeply involved with alcohol and drugs. Alcohol and tobacco have long been a part of George's life. He has used tobacco in the form of snuff or cigarettes since he was 10, and has used alcohol regularly since the age of 11. George is on eighteen-months' probation for an alcohol-related offense. During the past school year, two of his best friends have dropped out of school to take jobs. One works at a poultry plant catching chickens, and the other works for his father as a carpentry supervisor. Both students often stop by school to take George home in their new pick-up trucks.

The greatest battle George faces is to keep himself in school, straight and sober until he graduates. Outside pressures from peers and family have made this a difficult task for him to focus on. He has come to school twice during the 1988-89 year drunk and/or stoned.

During the 1988-89 school year, George was placed into an experimental classroom designed to provide students with a mentor/teacher. The class met for three consecutive periods each morning, in the same room, with the same group of students and teacher. Three subjects were taught during this block of classes. George flourished in this type of environment. He was able to spend time with his friends, was forced to cooperate with peers who he didn't always see eye to eye with, and slowly lost the need to cover up his feelings about being in school. The greatest benefits of block classes were the social interaction with students George normally never talked to, along with the discovery that teachers actually took the time to listen and tried to understand all of his problems. It was important as his teacher to look beyond the long hair and heavy metal t-shirt to the person inside.

What worked best with George was a simple, honest approach to school work. Assignments had to have a practical application before he would consider doing the work. George saw for the first time his own potential, and thrived on the praise and encouragement he received for a job well done. George was given a chance for success, and he found out he could do it.

George passed all three classes of his "block" last year, and is a solid "B" student in his tenth grade applied math class. His affinity for math and success from the block classes have helped him pass all of his classes for the first semester of the 1989-90 year. George is still very quiet in a group, but is more and more comfortable interacting with a wide group of students at school. He has a part-time job that is providing money for a car he hopes to have running soon. George now goes out of his way to avoid a fight despite provocation. George was simply given a chance.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER _____ *CASE NO.3*

1. *Identify the positive influences which have helped George to become a moderate success in school. Identify his strengths.*

2. *If you were George's counselor, what advice would you offer him at this time?*

3. *Outline the academic experiences which should be provided so that George might have a chance of succeeding as a high school graduate.*

CASE PROFILE NO. 4

"Prison No. #10056" JOHN

John developed the story of a potential dropout early in his childhood and that story strengthened with each passing year of school. A significant event in John's life came in the 4th grade - his parents divorced and John was uprooted and moved from school to school in both Virginia and West Virginia. John claims he attended 14 different schools in that year alone. John failed the 4th grade.

John and his 2 younger brothers and sister lived with their Mother and were supported by welfare assistance. John struck back at the world of bad breaks. He developed into the classic "problem Kid" in school. He argued with his mother, was defiant to his teachers, seldom did his homework, and in general, was disruptive and abusive in the classroom environment. John then failed the 6th grade.

Somehow, John made it to high school. By then he had become most hardened and embittered by a system that seemed cold, unfair and uncaring. He has subsequently commented that, "things could have turned out much different if I had just found one teacher in those early school years who would have really showed concern for me!"

In high school, John was placed in a special program for potential dropouts. He improved somewhat in his social skills development and even began to make academic progress but, again, outside pressures seemed to be controlling the events in John's life. John needed to work to help pay the bills at home and to help keep food on the table. John became the "father figure" for his younger siblings, and like John, they seemed to be following in his "problem kid" footsteps. John's mother worked at piecemeal jobs and was more involved with her personal life than her child rearing responsibilities, so John was forced to accept responsibilities beyond his years and experience. Again, school became a lower priority and by 10th grade John dropped out.

John didn't give up easily. He came back to school the following term. This time he was able to get into a work-release program to help him develop some job skills. He told one of his instructors he was going to graduate if he had to stay in school until he was twenty-five; he had a great desire to complete high school and receive his diploma. During that year John turned 18. He was notified that he would have to move out of his mother's home or she would have to forfeit welfare payments in the amount of pay he made at his school-related part-time job. Forced to move out and set up on his own, John now tried to maintain his own home, along with another 18 year-old male friend who was in a similar situation. John continued to go to school, to work and to assist his family, but the odds were not in his favor. Near the end of the school year, John once again saw that he was too academically deficient to complete that year and again he dropped out of school.

Wanting so much to complete high school, John once again re-enrolled. By this time he was a senior and twenty years old. Since age 18, and even before, alcohol had also become a problem with John. It had been a problem that he had grown up with in his family. Now, it was his own problem. First, it caused him to have his operator's license suspended and subsequently, he lost the use of his license for 10 years. Like the preceding years, his aborted efforts at completing school fell short and again John dropped out of high school for the third and final time.

It wasn't long after that, that John got into some serious trouble, an alcohol related event that caused him to be sentenced to prison for 5 years. He served two years and 4 months and was released early for good behavior. While in prison he completed his GED, but he will tell you today, "its just not the same." A significant milestone also occurred in John's life while in prison. For the first time in his life,he read a complete book on his own at the age of 22.

John now, at age 24, goes around to area schools talking to potential dropouts. Using himself and his real life experiences as examples, he shares with today's potential dropouts how things can be different for them if they just make some proper choices along the way. John knows that he has gotten a slow start in life due to some poor and some bad decisions he has made. Today, through his efforts and concern John hopes to prevent others from making some of those same mistakes he made. Better yet, he wants them to know that someone really does care. Possibly, it could have been different for John if he could have had someone to really care about him when his world was falling apart. That someone could have been a teacher.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER _____ *CASE NO.4*

1. *What are John's strengths?*

2. *In order to avoid feeling "total" responsibility for John as a teacher, what/who could have been a support person or system in his life while in school?*

3. *Would you invite John to speak with your class? Why or why not?*

4. *In your opinion, does this case story reinforce any stereotypes? If so, in what way?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 5

"Tied to Apron Strings" _____NATHAN

Nathan is the youngest of 6 children born to a family living in rural Virginia. He and his family were discovered in a remote part of the county when he was 6 years old. His mother had not enrolled him in school because he "leaked" and she was afraid the other children would make fun of him. Medical examination revealed a hernia that required surgical correction. Nathan's father received no formal education; his mother quit at age 14 to work in a logging operation and completed the 6th grade. The family relies on an older sister to deal with reading and writing matters.

Because of the remote area in which the family lived, the educational experiences of Nathan's brothers and sisters were limited. His oldest sister, now in her late twenties, had no formal education. The other siblings started school late and to date the farthest anyone has gone is 9th grade. Nathan's family does not value education. His mother states that the problems the other children had in school were due to students picking on them and teachers trying to force them to obey unreasonable rules.

The family now lives closer to town in a smaller trailer. Living in the household, in addition to Nathan and his parents, are two sisters, one 26 years old and the other 35 years old. They are a close family with limited financial resources. Both parents have health problems. Nathan's mom has been a long time heavy smoker and now has a serious case of emphysema.

Nathan's school history has been varied. He started kindergarten at 6 years of age, for previously stated reasons. His mother waited outside in the car every day while he was in school the first year. He ate lunch with her in the car because he would not eat in front of others. He apparently did not eat in front of family members at home. At this age Nathan was very close to his mother and would shake when approaching the school. He relied on his mother for many things such as dressing, bathing, and wiping. Each night he would take a bottle to bed and was having bathroom accidents during the day and night. Mom was willing to do whatever he needed since he was "her last baby." Although she was willing to be cooperative during his early education she warned that she would do anything to protect "her baby" and did not want him upset or "forced into any changes."

Nathan was identified as a special education student with emotional problems at the end of his kindergarten year. His attendance has been poor throughout and he now asks to stay home every other day. According to his mom he has a "nerve problem" that resulted from a car accident in 1987. His mom is still very protective. Nathan is not allowed to associate with anyone else in the trailer court because of their possible influence. He is in the 7th grade and weighs 239 pounds. When Nathan becomes 16 he plans to quit school in order to work with his father.

Nathan has borderline to low average intelligence, with slightly more developed non-verbal than verbal skills. His academics are significantly delayed. His math skills include addition, subtraction, simple multiplication and division. He is reading on a 4th grade level.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER _____ *CASE NO.5*

1. *Categorize all the factors which make Nathan an at-risk student.*

2. *In what ways is the school limited in providing the kinds of assistance needed by Nathan.*

3. *At what points and to whom might Nathan be referred for professional help beyond the school?*

4. *How could schools develop programs that might help kids like Nathan?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 6

"A Rough Start" DAVID

David is the oldest of two children born to David and Karen T. He lives with his mother and younger sister in a rural area; his father maintains a separate residence in a metropolitan suburb 60 miles away from David's home. His parents separated during the summer before David entered the first grade, while his mother was pregnant with his sister. Mr. and Mrs. T. are currently in the process of a divorce.

Mr. T. is employed as a printer. He has a 9th grade education, and he reported that he had difficulty with reading as a child and eventually dropped out of school. His family moved a lot during his childhood, once changing residences 8 times in a single year.

Mrs. T. owns and operates a small grocery. She reported also having academic difficulty (math), but did complete high school. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. T. relate details about their childhood and early family experience.

Immediately following the couple's separation, Mr. T. visited his two children on a weekly basis. For the past 18 months, however, he has visited on an irregular basis, often not seeing them for up to a month or more.

David's health through infancy and early childhood was unremarkable, with the exception of bilateral hernias, which were surgically repaired at age 3. There is no other history of hospitalization, and he has no history of major illnesses or injuries. His current health is good, except for allergy to dust and mold.

David has been receiving therapy, both individual and with his mother, since shortly after his parent's separation. He attends sessions with a private practice licensed clinical social worker on a bi-weekly basis. There is no report from the therapist as to progress or outcome of treatment.

David entered kindergarten at age 5 years, 5 months, where he had marginal success. He was waived from grade 1 to 2, and from grade 2 to 3, as he did not meet the criteria for promotion. (It is the policy of the local school board to not retain children in grades 1 and 2). During the 2nd grade he was referred to Child Study Committee (CSC), with the presenting problem of "difficulty learning 2nd grade material". He was reported by his teacher to be weak in reading and math, with poor comprehension and retention skills, short attention span, and "irregular learning pattern". The CSC referred David to full evaluation.

Psychological evaluation revealed that David had low average ability, with story scatter on subtests involving nonverbal skills. Specific deficits were noted in areas of figure-ground visual perception. Educational testing found David to be operating on a grade level one year below his current placement, in all areas. He demonstrated a relative strength in spelling, with no other significant strengths or weaknesses. Short-term auditory memory, as

assessed on the Woodcock-Johnson, was noted to be in the below average range.

When asked about school, David responded that he did not like school, but he has had good attendance. He spends one hour nightly on homework. His teacher sends notes home to his mother daily, to comment on his classroom performance and behavior.

Teacher's reports indicate that David keeps to himself, that he is easily frustrated by failure, then quickly becomes angry and irritable; he is described as having unpredictable moods. When tasks become difficult, he frequently loses patience and responds in an impulsive manner or gives up. He is described as resenting correction, though he seems to enjoy being helpful, both at school and home.

Testing concluded that David suffers from poor self-image, due to academic difficulties and domestic tensions. He often comments, for instance, that he should not have been born, that he is a bad person. Throughout the testing process, it was observed that David responded impulsively, and had difficulty maintaining attention. This observation seems to be in contrast with the report of his mother that he can watch cartoons on television for up to 2 hours at a time.

At the conclusion of the eligibility process, David was determined to be ineligible for special education and/or related services. The test data was interpreted as finding no discrepancy between his academic achievement and his cognitive ability. He completed the second grade with no further assistance.

At the beginning of the third grade, his teacher referred him to the School-Wide Assistance Team (SWAT). He continues to experience severe difficulties in the classroom. The SWAT team suggested a variety of accommodations be instituted. These include pairing him with a stronger student, working with an older student tutor, and developing daily feedback charts for targeted behaviors. It was also recommended that single-step directions be given. Arrangements were made for him to work 30 minutes each day with an adult volunteer on reading, vocabulary and comprehension. He also receives additional help in math from a paraprofessional 40 minutes each day, with one other student. Alternative instruction materials were provided to address deficits in sight word recognition. Assignments are shortened and timelines extended to provide additional opportunities for classroom success. To further encourage on-task behavior, the teacher focused on her proximity to David in his work space.

None of the strategies has resulted in increased success for David. His inability to focus on a task or sustain attention to any task is a major obstacle. After much discussion with his mother, concerning his apparent attention deficits, she scheduled an appointment for a comprehensive evaluation with the local child development center. The results of that evaluation are pending.

1. *Given the wide range of interventions and number of persons involved in providing help to David, discuss the possible value of collaboration among the various concerned persons including the clinical social worker.*

2. *How could the collaborative effort be planned, and by whom? Who would you include in the "case conference"?*

3. *How do special education eligibility guidelines hamper the process of helping students?*

4. *Why might David have scored the way he did on all his testing? Do you think the problem is "inside" David?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 7

"Search for Self-Esteem" _____ JENNY

Jenny grew up in a small town. However, she never stayed in one house long. Because of evictions and an inability to pay the rent her family moved from house to apartment to shack. Her father never had a stable job and her mother never had time for work, she was too busy entertaining her boyfriends, even though she was still married to and living with her husband, Jenny's father. There was little time for love or caring, her father was allegedly often drunk and abusive and her mother was allegedly having sexual relations with various men, often times in front of the children. Jenny was one of seven children in the household. Her three older brothers, one older sister and two younger half sisters were dirty and hungry most of the time, yet they knew no other way of life.

Jenny has been abused, either emotionally, physically, or sexually by most of the people in her life. At the age of four her father began to fondle her. By the age of six, when most girls are going to bed with their dolls, Jenny was going to bed with her father and being sexually abused. This continued for many years and became a way of life and a way of being loved for Jenny. By the age of thirteen, Jenny had had sex with many men. She also began to get into a lot of trouble. She began stealing, fighting, destroying public property, and breaking into other people's homes. A social worker was soon assigned to work on Jenny's case. The social worker, female, soon found out the type of environment Jenny had grown up in and discovered that she had been sexually abused by her father. The social worker worked hard on the case, but when it went to court Jenny stated that her father had not abused her, that she just said that for attention. The case was dropped.

At fourteen Jenny was placed in a home for disadvantaged and troubled girls, she is still there today. The two years she spent in the girls home became another obstacle for Jenny. The first year and a half have been very productive. She was taught how to care for herself and her belongings. She was always clean and neat. She was expected to do her homework and help out with the household chores. Jenny grew very close to the house parents, Kate and John. Kate became Jenny's mother and John her father. She was devastated when Kate and John announced they would be leaving. When Kate left, two weeks before John, Jenny was very depressed. However, John did not help her through this difficult time. Instead, he decided to take advantage of the two weeks alone with the girls. He fondled them, got them drunk, and even had sexual intercourse with Jenny. Jenny was not sure how to handle this; she loved this man like a father, a real father, not a lover. She decided she had been raped and began to tell many people about the experience, including myself. Being careful to document the information received from Jenny, I soon began to notice that each time she talked about the incident the story changed a little. The incident went from being rape to being her fault because she wanted to have sex with John and she had liked it. When the girls went to court to

testify, Jenny again denied that she had been raped. The case is still under investigation.

Jenny is a poor academic student for the most part. As a freshman she has a second grade reading level and is working at a third grade level in math. She has difficulty understanding simple concepts and following simple directions. Her grades reflect her poor ability. She has been tested for learning disability services but was found ineligible.

Jenny has an extremely poor self concept and has attempted suicide many times. She feels very insecure about herself and her abilities. She feels that there are only a few things in life she can do well, they are basketball, bowling, skating, and sex. Actually, if pushed, she could be a good athlete, however, she does not have the grades to participate in school athletics at this point. She works extremely well with mentally handicapped people and with small children. She wants a child of her own very badly -- someone "for her to love."

Jenny is motivated by attention and material things. Because she has never had much of either, she gets extremely excited over the possibility of receiving or winning money or prizes. She gets excited over hand-me-down clothes and never rejects them no matter what their size or condition. She works hard for attention whether positive or negative. Jenny is delighted with either. Needless to say, she is not a strong person, but she is always willing to help others.

Jenny is seeing a therapist once a week and periodically talks with guidance counselors and the school psychologist. As stated before, she was tested for learning disability services but found not eligible. She has been recommended for services for children with emotional problems and will go through testing this summer. She is now placed in a school program to teach her basic life skills, self-esteem and to help her with her other class work. This class has worked out well and hopefully will continue to have a positive effect.

The story of Jenny is very sad. She hides behind walls of "I don't care" and "so what." She wants to be loved more than any person I have ever met. She reaches out in so many ways, making it very tempting to allow the student/teacher relationship to become much more than that. One day she asked me to adopt her and my heart dropped. I wanted so badly to say YES, but I know that it would be bad for both of us. She has made me mad and she has made me cry. She has made me lose sleep at night and she has made me worry way too much for JUST BEING HER TEACHER! Jenny is a very special person, yet most of the time she is overlooked because she is not a top academic student or from a wealthy or middle income, stable family. She will have to struggle just to make it through high school and through life.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER _____ *CASE NO.7*

1. *What are the laws for handling information like Jenny shared with her teacher? How would you handle this situation?*

2. *Be aware of and express your personal feelings toward the various persons; Jenny, her father, the juvenile court judge, the social worker and John in this case story. How will you deal with these feelings?*

3. *How might your personal feelings influence the way you respond to Jenny as her teacher?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 8

"Out of Control" JOHN

I. Background:

A. 16 year old tenth grader - retained 9th grade
B. foster parents - displaced multiple times
C. prior enrollment in boys home
D. previous low attendance record
E. criminal juvenile record
F. real father with criminal record
G. low standardized test scores - probably due to low level of motivation
H. low grade point average due to bad attendance
I. parole officer and social worker assigned
J. living in small rural community

II. Profile:

A. height - 5'10", slight build, caucasian, neat appearance
B. pale complexion and signs of hyper-activity
C. talks about alcohol and drug abuse
D. common use of inappropriate language
E. has held several part-time jobs
F. no driving license
G. leaves class when confronted with behavior problems
H. few friends other than classmates in alternative education class

John was transferred into my alternative class because of repeated discipline problems in his classes. From the first day in class, it was very apparent that John did not like school. If confronted in class he would use the opportunity to make a spectacle of the situation. The use of annoying noises and inappropriate language was his specialty. He would always run out of class if he felt I was "on him" too much. I was worried about John's behavior in class and the fact he that showed up in class with cigarette burns on his arms. He was proud of these and would display them to the other students and even used a broken pencil to cut himself in class. I had to stop class one day to give John a band-aid -- he was bleeding on the table and floor.

When I contacted his foster mother she would say John was uncontrollable and she hoped finding him a part time job would help. Later, she was able to find him a part time job at a local supermarket and transported him to and from work after school everyday. I hoped the new job would help John understand the importance of school. He was not very good at taking orders and I hoped he would learn to understand that he must obey rules to be successful on the job and at school. I went to talk to his boss at work hoping the employees might be able to encourage John. John was fired after the first few weeks for not following his boss' requests.

John's behavior in school worsened day by day -- that is, when he was there. He started missing more often and would not do any school work when he was there. He sat in my class and wrote notes to the girl seated across from him. I stopped trying to encourage him to do the seat work, and instead settled for good behavior and his interest in reading aloud. We did quite a lot of reading aloud to keep his interest up. I started feeling like we were reaching him a bit. I kept in contact with his foster mother and let her know about his progress. She said she seldom saw John do much of anything at home, other than listen to hard rock music and watch TV. Oh, yes, he had started smoking in the house. She allowed him to smoke even though she disapproved of it.

John was suspended five days after being caught smoking twice, then ten days for getting caught a third time. One more smoking offense meant automatic suspension from school for the year. You could tell John was still secretly smoking when he could. I tried to council John or "preach to" him, as he put it, about the consequences of being suspended -- he would always say, "Oh well."

John stopped coming to school and got another part time job. I told the class he was in danger of getting into some serious trouble -- I felt it in my bones. His mother told me he was running around and she seldom saw him. I knew then, that it was only a matter of time (remembering his previous history) before he got into serious trouble.

They say John is now residing in a detention home in another city. He was moved from the local jail because of the seriousness of his crime. They did not want the other juveniles exposed to a multiple felon. John was caught breaking into a warehouse and stealing several valuable items.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER _____ *CASE NO.8*

1. *Looking carefully at the information on John's background and story, what responsibilities, in your opinion, does the school have to this young man?*

2. *Nearly everything in John's story and school record is problematic. Reading between the lines, surmise three possible "points of contact" which might provide clues for relating to John in a positive way. (i.e., a hobby, like or dislike, past experience, etc.).*

3. *To what extent should a teacher involve herself/himself emotionally in relating to a difficult case such as John presents? Any guidelines, cautions, etc.?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 9

"Boyfriend" GAIL

I. Background:
- A. 16 year old ninth grader - has been retained once in 9th grade — withdrew half way through the year
- B. mother works full-time — they never see each other
- C. she lives with her older boyfriend on the weekends
- D. father is not around
- E. previous low attendance
- F. average to high standardized test scores
- G. failed all subjects previous year - has an interest in typing and cosmetology

II. Profile:
- A. height - 5'6", slight build - has previously been obese - went on a crash diet, dresses in fashion, uses make-up and seems concerned about her appearance - will groom herself in class
- B. shows pictures of self and boyfriend in class and talks about their close relationship
- C. No drivers license - has worked part-time jobs before - presently unemployed
- D. Very talkative in class and seems interested in class work
- E. wants to graduate and finish this school year in good standing
- F. often tardy to school

Gail started off the year in a positive way. Her attendance was very good and she seemed ready to have a good year. She used her above average intelligence and quick wit to excel in almost all her classes. She got along with all of her teachers and was very conscientious in doing her work.

Gail did not want to talk much about her home situation. She always came back to her boyfriend - it was obvious he was the center of her life. Her mother was hard to contact and she usually had little to say when I did talk to her. She gave little output and wanted only to hear me discuss Gail. She seemed in a hurry to end the conversation.

Gail's attendance started dropping off after Christmas. She said she was going to move in with her boyfriend permanently. I could not contact her mother. When she did come to class, she just talked of her boyfriend, showed off his gifts to her and did little class work. Her other teachers expressed concern about her performance in their classes.

Gail stopped coming to school all together. We heard she was living with her boyfriend and working part-time now. I was able to contact her over the phone while she was visiting another student's house. She said she missed school and might come back next year. She said she needed to get her driver's license so she could bet a better job. She also said she hated her mother and had broken up with her boyfriend.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER_____CASE NO.9

1. *In your opinion, what are Gail's strengths? Can you suggest ways Gail's teacher could have provided more assistance?*

2. *Given Gail's abilities, what incentives could be used to motivate her to stay in school?*

3. *Should a school intervene when students struggle with boyfriend-girlfriend relationships? If so, how?*

CASE PROFILE NO. 10

"Starting Line-Up" JERRY

Jerry, an 11th grader in a rural high school, had a tutor assigned to him from among the education students of a local college. During the fall term the tutor met with Jerry in science and reading classes on a regular basis. The tutor soon detected that Jerry's poor motivation for school work was tied to the low expectations which the school had of him. In science, Jerry saw little need for learning about stars in the astronomy unit. Often he was not interested in the stories in the reading textbook.

Although Jerry could "catch on" fairly easily if the subject matter interested him, his academic achievement was hampered by a short attention span and a lack of effort. Jerry took the easiest courses possible and managed to get by with a minimum of work. Often he obtained answers by asking the teacher or by copying from the boy seated behind him. One day while in the library, the tutor noted that Jerry was engrossed by an encyclopedia article on snakes. An article on the Vietnam War also caught Jerry's attention.

In the summer preceding this term, Jerry's mother had left with him and his younger brother to get away from her husband because of his drinking and physical abuse of her. Jerry got along well with his mother, but disliked his father because he would never do anything with him except make him work. Generally, Jerry did not want to talk about personal things which bothered him.

Jerry had a girlfriend at the school, but things were not going well between them. During one of his discussions with the tutor Jerry announced that his girlfriend may be pregnant. Jerry worried about this and the likelihood that he might have to drop out of school to marry her and begin work. The tutor talked with him about possibilities for continuing his education through night school or by studying for G.E.D. tests. Later Jerry found out that his girlfriend was not pregnant. He told the tutor that he was going to get into a fight the next day because another boy was interested in her.

Jerry was in the starting line-up of the school's football team. At one game Jerry broke his thumb and was absent from school for two days. When hunting season came along, Jerry was out for several more days. By way of future vocational interest, Jerry mentioned he might like to be a brick mason or mechanic.

Jerry spoke freely of getting drunk with his friends over the weekends. The tutor wondered if Jerry's wavering attention and interest in the classroom might not be related to substance abuse. Although Jerry was generally respectful of his teachers, the tutor noted one angry scene when a teacher refused to accept a note he brought without the proper pass from the principal's office. On another occasion Jerry was sent to the office to obtain

a tardy pass because of entering the classroom fifteen seconds after the bell had rung. That day he had a hard time settling down to work.

During the term the tutor was interested not only in helping Jerry with his studies but also in building a personal relationship with him. This developed slowly and somewhat erratically as Jerry began to trust the tutor. In his own words the tutor struggled with this question: "Does Jerry deserve having more expected of him, or am I imposing my own values on him?"

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER *CASE NO.10*

1. *If you were the tutor, what other information would you like to know about Jerry? How and where would you obtain such information?*

2. *From the teacher's standpoint, how would you balance your interest in Jerry as an individual and/or in Jerry's marginal school work?*

3. *Jerry may illustrate the type of student described as "life bright, but school dull." How should the school work with that kind of student?*

4. *Jerry frequently came into conflict with "the culture of the school" (rules, procedures, traditions). How important is it to expect at-risk students to conform to the school's culture? Should any modification have been made for Jerry?*

5. *Consider the questions raised by the tutor in the last paragraph.*

Case profiles 1-10 were written by teachers and drop-out coordinators who live and teach in the rural central Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Case profiles 11-12, both of which suggest an urban setting, were reprinted by permission from the book When I Was Young I Loved School edited by Anne Sheffield and Bruce Frankel. Please consult the resource section "Books," page 45, for additional information.

CASE PROFILE NO. 11

"The Dropout"_____SHEILA

When I was young I loved school. I was so good in school that my mom trusted my judgement. If I said I didn't want to go, she said, "Okay. You know." I've been through so many different schools. There were a couple of times where I'd switch schools three times in one year, even in the first grade.

That was hard. But in a way it was good. I learned how to adjust and meet people really easily. There's nothing more horrifying than when you have to go into a new school and you don't know anybody. Everybody's looking at you. But that doesn't faze me anymore.

In eighth grade I started cutting school. It was kind of fun, you know. I got in a lot of trouble. I wasn't there enough. When I fell behind, I got frustrated. But I did all right. I got straight A's.

In the ninth grade I really started fucking up. They were threatening my mom. If I didn't go to school, they were going to fine her fifty days in jail or something like that. She got all freaked out. That's why she finally said, "Well, why don't you go to your dad. I don't want to go to jail."

My dad used to beat me up pretty bad. I had bruises. I wouldn't go to school because I was afraid. What could I say? "Oh, I got in a fight." Five fights a day?

I wouldn't go to school when it was real bad. I was afraid because nobody believed me. My dad was like Mr. Nice Cop. "Oh, he wouldn't do that!"

He's a big guy, right? He's like 6'4" and two hundred pounds. Lifts weights and stuff. He beat me for fifteen minutes on my ass. I had broken blood vessels all over. I couldn't sit down and I had bruises on my face.

I finally went and told the school nurse what happened. They got me a social worker. I told them, "Don't say anything to him. Don't confront him until you get me out of the house." They said, "Okay, okay, don't worry."

The motherfuckers told him, called him and let him know. He came home and beat the shit out of me. He kicked my door in. I locked my

door, because I knew that he was going to come in. I was so scared, I was hiding. Finally, I got away.

Sometimes I wonder how my dad feels.

He just pretends I don't exist now. I mean, I am his only kid. But I guess he doesn't care either. For a long time I did. For a long time, it was real hard. But now, I don't care.

I moved to California at the end of August, two Augusts ago. I went to Berkeley High. I liked it. I was really impressed by all the opportunities you had there and all the different choices you had. It was stimulating.

But after I met people and I started having a social life and everything, I'd miss my morning classes a lot. I wasn't really living at home. I was living wherever. And I was taking lots of acid. My boyfriend at the time wasn't really doing anything for himself. He wasn't' going to school. And I just kind of stopped going.

We ended up running away. We went down to Carson and got as far as Santa Barbara before the cops got us. This one cop said, "I'm going to make sure the two of you never see each other again."

They sent me to the survival school, which was fucking hell. It was intense, the most intense experience I've ever had. No baths, no change of clothes, no change of underwear for three weeks. And no food for three days. Hike ten miles a day with a forty pound backpack on, through sand, up mountains. You didn't see any sign of civilization for three weeks.

It was in the winter. There was snow on the mountains. No tent, no sleeping bags, just a blanket. You had to dig these little ditches at night for your bed. You would dig a hole and you would put hot rocks in it, then cover it back up with dirt. There were six of us there. Side by side, we looked like six level graves.

People got so hungry they ate mice. I'm not lying. They ate ants. I mean, it was really intense. I'm a vegetarian. No thank you, I'll pass.

Education is really important to me. My mother has stressed that my whole life. I think from the time I was born, she said, "You're going to get an education." That's just been pounded into me, right? That's probably the only thing that I listened to. The only thing.

I just didn't want to be in a classroom. There's a lot to learn, but you can't learn it in the classroom.

I stared taking drugs when I was so young. The first time I ever smoked a cigarette, I was ten. The first time I smoked pot, I was ten. The first time I took acid, I was twelve. I've done just about everything, I think.

I remember a time when I said I'll never stick a needle in my arm. I truly believed that. I don't know what it was, I got into this -- it sounds so

sappy to say -- live-for-the-moment thing. Yeah, just take everything as it comes. I was just...spontaneous. I loved it.

I'll try anything once. But I never thought that I would become a goddamn strung-out junkie. That's kind of incredible.

I look back on myself when I was in the seventh grade. I was such an intellectual. I was such a good girl then. I was like everybody's babysitter. Everybody trusted me.

I've done so many things that if I was a mother, I wouldn't know what to do. I'd want to be there, but what the hell do you do when your baby's a junkie?

I'm so glad that I turned out the way I am instead of this little white, suburban rich kid that didn't know anything. I'm thankful that I ended up like this instead.

I don't consider myself a dropout. 'Cause I'm not. I'm not a dropout. I'm not quitting, you know? I have no intention of stopping. Because there's so much more. Right now, I'm just taking a temporary pause.

I feel like needles and drugs and being addicted -- it sucks the soul right out of you. You become such an empty shell, you know? I had really good friends. We'd get high together and stuff. But they just got swallowed up. It's real sad to me. I think it's also hard because I let a lot of people down when I was on drugs. When you're on drugs like that -- shooting up heroin and speed and coke -- it's real addicting, and that's all you think about. I let a lot of people down, and that was no fun. I flaked on everybody all the time. It took a lot to get back the trust I lost.

I got down to ninety-six pounds. I was so unhealthy, I looked like shit. And then I knew that I had to quit -- I had to. I really want to have kids some day. I really do. I just started thinking in terms of the future. Because I didn't think about the future ever. I just thought about now.

Now that I keep the future in mind, it makes a big difference. A big difference. I'm going back to school. I don't want to quit school. Even when I quit school before, I knew that I would never be a dropout. I want to be educated. And I still want to go to college. I still want to be a veterinarian.

You know, sometimes it scares me, because I think, God, could I do it? Can I do it? I can't even get up in the morning. How are you going to go to fucking school when you can't even get up in the morning? They're not going to go for that. But I'm going to try.

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CASE PROFILE NO. 12

"The Principal"_____ROBERTO

What's the best and worst about being a principal? I never think about the worst parts because they'll wear you down. The only thing I ever think about is the good parts and that's being around the kids more than anything else. I like to be around kids.

I'm a high school dropout. The way we try to handle problems is on an individual basis. I don't like treating human beings in groups. They lose their identity, then you have a problem with that kid. We try to individualize it to where we deal with them one-on-one and not punish an entire group for the sins of a few, but deal with those few as individuals.

I can't take these kids home. I don't have control over them when they leave this building. I can't change their lives outside. The only thing we can do is when they walk in the front door of this school, we have a consistency here.

We have a set of rules and a set of expectations. Everybody is treated equally. Everybody is dealt with in the same way. We don't make allowances for one individual that we don't make for others. The kids know that there's a place in their lives that they can go where the same faces and the same people and the same things are always going to be there.

Out there, things change for them day in and day out. One third of our kids move every year. I doubt if ten percent of the kids that start here as freshman actually wind up graduating from this school. Nobody knows where they go. All we know is that they come through and they're gone one year to the next. But the thing that school can do that's more important than anything else is to be consistent. That's it. It provides the only consistency in the kid's life.

Why did I drop out? I didn't see any need in going to school. I didn't project myself going to college. Somebody said to me all along the way, "Well, you're one of eleven kids. You're not going to college."

My dad raised eleven kids and he never went to college. He never graduated from high school. I didn't see any need in graduating from high school 'cause I could go to work and make as much money, if not more than my dad would ever make. I could see myself buying a house right down the street from where my parents grew up.

I already had my life figured out when I was a kid. I said, "Well, what's the sense of wasting my time going to school when I can just go out there and go to work."

There's a misconception that kids that drop out of high school are not intelligent. They're some of the most intelligent. Sometimes they don't pay attention in class because they're smart alecks and already know it.

I used to have a teacher who gave me multiple choice history tests. I'd skip school all the time. I'd come in on Fridays and take her test and I'd make an A. I already knew it. She used to put me in another teacher's class who was off that period. That teacher's job was to watch me take the test, to see to it that I didn't cheat. They couldn't figure out how I was doing it.

It's kind of like, you know, defy the system. There's a way to defy the system in any way, shape or form. You can defy it passively or you can defy it overtly. The passive resistant kids are the ones that drive everybody crazy. The overt kid — he's easy to deal with. The kid that disrupts and the kid that wrecks your class — you can get rid of him in a minute, bam!

The one that really hurts you, that will drive teachers up the wall, is the passive kid. The smart, passive kid who walks in every so often, who sits there and just looks at you and will not do a darn thing, that kid blows your consistency in the classrooms. He doesn't see any reason for being in school.

One of the things we do more and more, day in and day out, is motivate. It's the one thing I think we try to do more than anything else. I have seventeen hundred kids here. How many kids do I reach? It's so different for every human being. A lot of time kids say, "Well, nobody motivated me." That's not true. Somebody tried.

Very few kids ever go through school without a teacher or some adult saying, "Hey, you can do better." Or, "That was very good," or "You did a great job." But they don't have it often enough. The schools can't cover every aspect of it. That's what parents were designed to do. That's the whole idea of having kids, for someone to be at home to say, "Hey, you're a great human being. You're a fine young man and I'm proud of you."

We can do it. But the kids look at us here at school and they say, "Well, you people get paid to say things like that."

We don't get paid to do that. We get paid to do very little. But we do a heck of a lot for kids.

Our attitude has to remain constant. That's the funny thing about it. You see, you can evolve as a person, you can change, but your basic premise of engineering this job always has to be the same. If you ever lose that, then you need to leave, because that's what keeps you doing your job. My whole basic reason for entering the teaching profession was to help kids. I keep that in the forefront. The day I forget it, that's the day all those bad things I told you I don't like talking about, they creep up on you and close in on you. Then you lose your whole impact, your whole perspective.

My impact upon kids is good because I remember that the one reason I'm here — the only reason I'm here — is to serve them. That's all I have in my life. Without that I'll be some crusty old administrator who sits

behind his desk and shuffles his papers all day.

Why do I want to help them? All of us, I think, want to save the world and make it a better place.

One thing I always tell the teachers is that we can't blame the kids because the good Lord gave them the parents He gave them. And the only thing we can do is take care of the kids and try to make them good human beings.

I had an eighteen-year-old arrested before I left this morning to go to my meeting. They had a problem outside the school and this girl came up on campus to beat up some sixteen-year-old because they had a problem three months ago, somewhere out there.

See? They bring all that excess baggage. But you see, the school has to say, "This is school, and school is different. Schools have rules and schools care and schools demand and schools expect."

Are the rules here strict? It depends on who you talk to. If you talk to me, I'd say they're about as strict as I like having them. If you talk to somebody else, they'd say they could be stricter.

One of the worst things you can do for kids or anybody is create a system of dual standards. It's divisive. We never kick a kid out for tardiness. We're never going to kick a kid out for those kinds of things. We have an elaborate process that goes from dealing with them in the office to parent conference, to a series of hearings, and then recommendations for an alternative placement after that.

And expulsion is a rarity. If it would ever be used, it would be in an extremely severe case, an assault on a teacher or another student. That's why I had her sent to jail.

When an individual comes with that malice aforethought, then that's assault, and that's when you treat it differently.

But, no, kids aren't kicked out of school.

You don't kick out the lower spectrum of the school. What you find out is the kid that violates the system sometimes can be one of your smartest kids. If we were to give IQ tests to a lot of our kids who come and go and play the silly game of cutting class, that would get to us. That's what drives us crazy sometimes. Because they won't come. See, they're so smart that they actually, legitimately think they're smarter then the system and have all the answers.

That's the way I used to feel. I used to feel I could beat the system, like I was smarter than people in the system. What I realized was that I

couldn't go on beating the system forever. The only way to ever change the system is to do it from within.

I think that administrators in positions like mine have all forgotten that the key reason for them being there is to serve the kids, not vice versa. Everybody has got the kids serving the teachers and administrators. And it's the other way around.

What's happened is everybody's forgotten. We've set up schools for adults, not kids. You don't have to change anything in the school except the attitude, to an attitude that says kids can do it.

Because if you ever think they can't, then what you've done, psychologically, is closed the door on that kid. You always have to think that no matter how tough they are, how poor they are, how difficult they are, and everything also, that they can do it — if you just expect them to.

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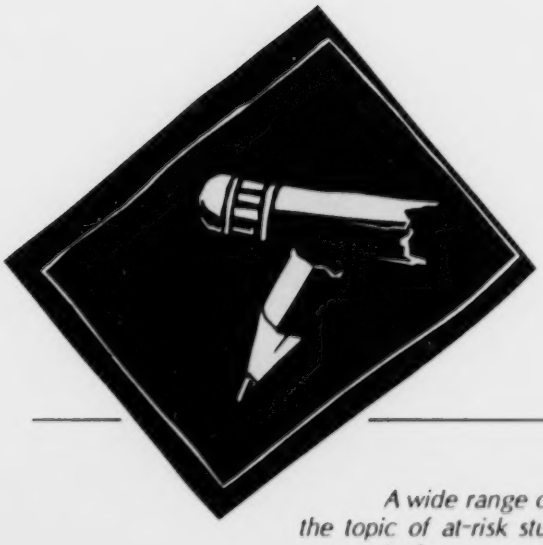

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

A wide range of sources for identifying controversial issues dealing with the topic of at-risk students can be found at one's fingertips. One valuable source is the newspaper. Issues regarding at-risk students can be located on the editorial page, in feature articles, and occasionally in cartoons. Another source for material includes the "issue" section of many current education publications. For example, NEA Today offers a section on current debates. Usually two educators address the pros and cons of a particular issue such as "Does raising academic standards increase student dropouts?" or "Should dropouts be denied driver's licenses?"

Activity #1
Probe the Issues

A. Issue: Corporate Responsibility and Dropouts

Focus Question: Do businesses have a special responsibility when employing high school students?

Strategy: Small group discussion

1. Have each student read the letter to the editor "Corporate Responsibility: Trading Views" and "Rocco's Response." (Reprinted by permission on the following pages).
2. Formulate groups of 3 or 4 persons.
3. Ask each group to respond to one of the following tasks:
   -Examine the issue from the differing perspectives of the teacher and the public relations director.
   -Discuss the proposition "that businesses should limit the number of hours a high school student may work."
   -Generate several follow-up questions to the focus question.
   -Attempt to achieve consensus on a position regarding employment for high school students.
4. Coordinate a reporting back discussion.

Sources: Letter to Editor, "Corporate Responsibility: Trading Views," Daily News Record, Harrisonburg, VA. May 25, 1990, pg. 6.
"Work and What It's Worth," Newsweek, Summer/Fall 1990.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY:
TRADING VIEWS
Daily News Record: Friday, May 25 1990, pg.6

Dear Editor:

Michael (not his real name) is a high school senior sitting half asleep in my class. Michael is not a bad kid. In fact, he is reasonably bright and can be a good participant in class discussions and other activities. Recently, though, his attendance is less than regular, and when in school he is visibly exhausted causing a decline in participation and apathy toward both homework and tests. This frustrating situation has prompted several confrontations in classes usually followed by quiet talk in the hall.

Michael, being a senior, is approaching adulthood and has personal responsibility for his behavior. His parents share in that responsibility. Those facts are quite clear.

Why the decline in Michael's performance in school? Several months ago he got a job at Rocco Inc. Over $6.00 an hour - good money for a teenager! Michael works over 40 hours per week, going to work after school and staying until 1 a.m. The next morning he drags himself to my class to catch up on his rest I've inquired about why he works such hours. Part of the answer is that Rocco's attitude is take the job and the hours or leave it.

So, why write a letter to the editor about my problems with a student? Because some of the problems associated with his academic performance lie at Rocco's doorstep. Responsible employers of high school students care about their young employees' performances in school. Many employers take an active part in the educational process by checking on a student's attendance and grades - does Rocco? Many responsible business firms limit the number of hours that a high school student mY work - obviously not Rocco! These same firms assure that students do not work during exam week and they make reasonable accommodations for extracurricular activities - apparently not Rocco! Such firms value the contributions of their young employees but they refuse to profit at the expense of an individual's educational opportunity - not Rocco!

I believe that businesses have a special responsibility when employing high school students - a type of corporate citizenship. Michael has chosen the immediate rewards of money in his pocket because he is unable to see the less tangible but very real rewards of education. When firms like Rocco are so callous with the educational needs of teenage employees they do a grave disservice to the community and to the nation.

Thomas W. Long
Mt. Solon

ROCCO'S RESPONSE

When our respect for education is questioned, we become very concerned. Education is vital to our company's success: we know the continuing development of our employees is our competitive edge. Our commitment to the importance of education clearly includes a teenager's working for our company - and succeeding in his or her schoolwork.
While it is difficult for us to address a letter lacking details, workplace specifics or real names, we can certainly explain our approach.

As a practice, we handle these situations individually and face to face. We have a longstanding custom of working with our employees on alternate work schedules or solving other problems that may affect their jobs and their personal lives. We have dealt with the need for our employees to manage work and school in the past and will certainly make arrangements for this students.

We suggest this student bring the situation to the attention of his supervisor and the human resources department and request a modified work schedule so a suitable plan can be worked out. The writer assumes our attitude would be unresponsive to the student's needs. In fact, if the student had brought his situation to the attention of the human resources group or his

supervisor, I am sure the situation would not have reached this point. Nor were we aware of an educator's concern. A telephone call or a visit from any member of the educational community to me or any member of human resources is always welcome. They will find Rocco on the same team, for we are in the education business, too.

Our education initiatives include a literacy program that works in full partnership with the area post-secondary schools to send a "school on wheels" to our different plant sites. Our program has enabled ten students to receive GED diplomas. We received a phone call from a very excited teacher just last week informing us that four more students have passed their GEDs.

We teach the English language to Hispanics. These ESL classes are on the job site and, like the literacy program, concentrate on individual instruction, thus allowing each student to work at his or her own pace. Additionally, the company pays for tuition and related educational expenses for any work-related class. The result is that if an employee wanted to return to school, Rocco would pay for it.

We welcome inquires about our programs and are sending a copy of Rocco's employee education opportunities to city and county superintendents to help in the schools' awareness of our commitment to our employees continuing education.

The writer has accused Rocco of being callous. On the contrary, we strive to be a responsible corporate citizen in a community we have lived in and cared about for more than 50 years. Rocco is a progressive and enlightened employer, committed to education and our employees.

Patricia L. May
Director of Public Relations, Rocco Inc.

Reprinted by permission. Letter to Editor, "Corporate Responsibility: Trading Views," Daily News Record, Harrisonburg, VA. May 25, 1990, pg. 6.

For additional sources of material for classroom debate, see past issues of NEA Today.

Issue:	*Academic Standards and Dropouts*
Focus Question:	*Does raising academic standards increase student dropouts?*
Source:	*NEA Today, Sept. 1989, p.43.*
Issue:	*Driver's Licenses and Dropouts*
Focus Question:	*Should dropouts be denied driver's licenses?*
Source:	NEA Today, Oct. 1989, p. 39.

Activity #2
Can You Agree?

Controversial statements, if managed appropriately, can provide the college instructor a rich opportunity to focus classroom discussion on a particular issue. Following is an example of the "Can You Agree" format statements. By design, the statements contain cliches and ambiguous statements. Direct students to complete the exercise individually, with the following instructions: Read the statements to yourself. In spite of any reservations you may have about a given statement, take a stand. Mark each statement with an "A" for agree or "D" for disagree.

Divide the class into small groups of 3 or 4, and continue with the following instructions: Try to agree or disagree unanimously with each statement as a group. Try especially to discover reasons for disagreement; you may change the wording in any statement enough to promote unanimity.

KEY: "A" if you agree; "D" is you disagree

_____ 1. Homogeneous grouping is desirable for at-risk students because they are then less discouraged by their own disabilities.

_____ 2. Schools should provide family and individual counseling services.

_____ 3. The single most important activity to bolster a student's self esteem is to teach them a new skill.

_____ 4. Low performance in school indicates either a learning disability or a learning deficit.

_____ 5. Because of inappropriate labeling and breach of confidentially, teachers should not have access to social service or psychological evaluations on students.

_____ 6. A motivated student is a good student.

_____ 7. The move toward a more structured curriculum in Kindergarten and elementary grades contributes significantly to the failure rate of at-risk children.

_____ 8. Kids today are less motivated than they were in years past.

_____ 9. Schools must begin to take on the role of the family in order to make a difference.

_____ 10. School suspension provides at least an immediate solution to the problem of at-risk disciplinary behaviors.

Activity #3 _____
Ranking Educational Policies and Procedures

This activity will allow you to rank the values you believe to be most important to education. In studying educational systems, you will discover that people have differing opinions on the values that guide educational ethics.

For example, one educator may see his/her role as insuring that the institution is rated high academically. Conversely, another educator may operate under the premise that all students enrolled be given broad exposure to a wide range of experiences, both academic and otherwise. Both educators or schools want to create the best educational atmosphere possible, yet their underlying values can contrast so greatly that the two schools will be radically different.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Part 1: The class should break into groups of 4 to 6 students. Each group is asked to rank the educational values listed below as though they were the members of a school board of a rural Appalachian school. The school is dealing with a 25% dropout rate. Use "1" to designate the most important concern, "2" for the second most important concern, and so on.

The school should:

_____ Treat each student according to their individual needs.

_____ Provide counseling when necessary.

_____ Make home visits on a regular basis.

_____ Give homework regularly.

_____ Provide 2 field trips per class per year.

_____ Require that competency records be posted in each classroom.

_____ Promote extracurricular activities.

_____ Provide after school activity busses.

_____ Give academic achievement recognition regularly.

_____ Give student recognition regularly, i.e. birthdays, citizenship, friendship awards.

_____ Encourage student participation in state and national academic competitions.

_____ Provide at-risk inservice training for teachers.

PART 2:

Step 1. Working within the same groups, rank the educational values as though the group is the school board of a suburban middle class school.

Step 2. After each group has come to a consensus, compare answers with those of other groups in a class-wide discussion.

Step 3. The entire class should discuss the following questions:

a. What educational values did the class deem most important for the rural Appalachian school? Why?

b. What educational values did the class deem most important for the suburban school? Why?

c. How do you explain the difference?

d. How would <u>you</u> rank the educational values?

Activity #4
Using Case Stories: Observations vs. Judgements

A case story is a systematic procedure for gathering observational data. It is a useful tool for research in everyday class situations.

A case story is a written record regarding a student, his background and behavior over a period of time. Whether the teacher is recording personal data information or describing behavior, it is important to differentiate observation (what one sees and hears) from judgement (interpreting, evaluating the observed behavior). In other words, the case story should differentiate the record into two parts: description of an incident and the teacher's interpretation. A mingling of observational fact and its evaluation makes the case story less objective and more difficult to interpret. Also different observers may likely interpret an anecdote differently.

In the following excerpts from a case story written by a college student tutoring an at-risk student, note the extent to which each paragraph provides observation or judgement.

"Several times Mike remarked that he saw no reason to study about stars and other things like that (the current subject in science). We talked about that some, but his perception of science did not change. Again, I noticed that Mike seems to understand things when he is prompted to actually think about them. He is fairly easily distracted."

"At this point, I am guessing that part of Mike's lack of motivation is due to the fact that expectations of him have never been high at school."

"Mike was totally disinterested in studying science, and he just wanted to sleep. He saw no reason to study science. What does he need science for anyway?"

"For second period, Mike had an FFA meeting, so I went to the meeting with him. This was the closest I have been to seeing Mike act like he had friends. He talked and joked around with some of the other students at the meeting, and didn't act like he was out of place."

"In Reading Class, there was a substitute teacher. I was very interested in seeing if the students would attempt to "sink the sub." The sub emphasized discipline and proper conduct more than the regular teacher did, and I noticed some resentment on the part of the students. It occurred to me that maybe students' misbehave for subs not only because they think they can get away with more with a sub, but also because their daily routine is disrupted. They have come to know, and trust, the methods of their teacher, and having a new teacher means relearning a lot of things that had already been learned."

"Mike has a tendency in this class to not listen to the teacher when she lectures, and this greatly affects his work in this class. I also noticed today that Mike knows how to ask the teacher for information in such a way as to get it with very minimal amount of work (on his part)."

"He keeps insisting that the math he is doing is fifth grade stuff, and I'm not sure if he says this because he feels he has to, or because he really feels that it is easy. Some of the problems dealing with feet and inches, subtraction and addition, he was good at, but he didn't seem to be as clear on fractions and addition and multiplication of them. He was fairly cooperative with the math, and did not seem to rebel like he does with the science. He thinks his math teacher is good looking, and this may be one of the factors that affects his attitude towards the class."

"He went on to say that his girlfriend thinks she might be pregnant, and he may have to drop out of school. My initial reaction was mixed. If he drops out, that means that I will have failed. Close on the heels of that, though, was the thought that if he does drop out because of this, I will not be responsible for his failure to stay in school. Absolution from failure (for me) sounded good. Pretty soon, though, I realized that it was Mike's life that we were talking about. I began to imagine myself in his situation, and I realized that my own worries about failure were pretty irrelevant. Mike has been aware of this possibility for about three weeks now, and I think he has spent considerable time and energy either thinking about it or worrying about it. His fears at this point are the following: firstly, he is afraid of telling his mother because he is sure she'll be very angry; secondly (even though he did not voice this directly), I think he is worried about having to quit school and get a job. He seems fairly sure that, if she is indeed pregnant, he will marry her."

"Mike is in a very tight spot emotionally. His life is all of a sudden threatening to spin madly out of control, and he is barely in the middle of adolescence. His whole life from now on could be drastically changed, and very possibly in a direction that he doesn't want it to. From the way that he has talked about his girlfriend at times, I suspect that their relationship is not the best, and that at times he feels like dumping her. And I suspect that he is aware of the fact that he may not always want to stay married to her. He doesn't quite know what he might be getting himself into."

"Today Mike shocked me, totally. When we got in to the science class (which we were going to be out of), Mike gave a note to the teacher. There was an exchange (verbal) that I didn't quite understand, that ended with Mike throwing down the paper and yelling, "Just sign the dammed paper." Whereupon, the teacher asked if I would take Mike down to the office. So, we went to the office, and Mike talked with Mr. Travis. Mike was supposed to have gotten a pass before going to class (for his teacher to sign), but, even though he knew this, he didn't. So, when that teacher refused to sign the handwritten note that Mike had brought, he became angry at her. I was very surprised at his outburst, as I've never seen Mike even hint at this kind of

behavior or attitude. Most of all, I was surprised at his great lack of respect for the teacher. (Shows how things can change - just last time I was remarking how respectful Mike seemed.) His blow up was fast and furious. (He never threatened physically, however.) It occurred to me right away that something else was bothering him. Home? His girlfriend? His dad? This did not seem like typical behavior for Mike."

"It seemed to me that Mike treated Mr. Travis, the principal, and me differently from his teacher, who is female, which made me wonder whether part of the problem in the first place wasn't due to Mike' feelings about women, and about the treatment he should give them (or that he thinks he should give them). I wonder if this carries over to other teachers."

"Mike seemed to understand the material well enough. It seems, though, that at times Mike is like a sponge - he will soak up information really well, but, when he gets away from the water, it all dries up. I wonder why this is. Maybe it's just because he is so uninterested in the material. At any rate, he paid attention very well, and was involved in the process today."

"There was a substitute teacher in reading today, and Mike did not have a very good period. To begin with, he walked in about 15 seconds after the bell, and had to go to the office to get an excuse. This frustrated me, because it seemed to be nitpicking to have him get an excuse for as late as he was, and he ended up being out of class 5-10 minutes getting the slip from the office. Discipline took precedence over learning. While I realize that sometimes this has to be the case, it did not seem to work real well in this instance, because, for the early part of the class, Mike who normally behaves well and works steadily in this class, became rather stubborn and reluctant. He was looking to, in minor ways, irritate the teacher. It also seemed to me that Mike needed some extra attention today. He was doing things, and then getting that little mischievous glint in his eye when I looked his way. I tried to not ignore him, in case he was asking for attention, but I also did not want him to feel encouraged by my interest in his pranks, either. As class went on, he seemed to settle down."

RESOURCES

The following list of resources represents some of the most recent (1988-90) publications dealing with the topic of at-risk students. This list is simply a starting place. Users are encouraged to include additional resources in the space provided. ISBN numbers, addresses and phone numbers have been included to facilitate acquisition of materials. Books dealing with case study methodology have been listed separately.

1. Brodinsky, Ben, and Katherine E. Keough. Students At Risk: Problems and Solutions. American Association of School Administrators, 1990.
"Analyzes academic, familial, and social problems of at-risk students and describes a variety of existing programs designed to meet their needs."
ISBN 0-87652-1235: $13.95 (paperback)

2. Bronikowske, Dennis. Truancy: A Prelude to Dropping Out. National Educational Service/NASSP, 1989.
This book "describes programs in three different school districts which have been effective in reducing incidents of truancy and dropout rates." Also, truancy is discussed from a legal and psychological perspective.
Available from: National Educational Service/NASSP
P.O. Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402
Phone: 812-336-7700: $12.95

3. Carroll, Joseph M., The Copernican Plan: Restructuring the American High School. The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, Andover, MA 1989.
ISBN 1878234005: $14.95

4. Capuzzi, Dave, ed. Youth At Risk: A Resource For Counselors, Teachers, and Parents. American Association Counseling and Development, 1989.
ISBN 1-556-20065-X: $29.95

5. Dimidjian, Victoria Jean. Early Childhood At Risk: Actions and Advocacy For Young Children. National Education Association, 1989.
ISBN 0-8106-1481-2: $11.48

6. Elkind, David. Miseducation: Preschoolers At Risk. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989.
"My aim is to help parents of young children understand the dynamics of miseducation, the short and long-term risks of such practices, and ways to identify healthy education in schools and to practice it at home." Written primarily for parents, but also helpful to teachers and administrators.
ISBN 0394552563: $18.45 (hardback) ISBN 0394756347: $8.95 (paperback)

7. Farrell, Edwin. Hanging in and Dropping Out. Voices of At-Risk High School Students. Teachers College Press, 1990.
"Takes a unique and engaging look at how at-risk students see themselves by using extensive dialogues from the students themselves. The book addresses the plight of these students . . . also the factors that contribute to dropping out, including economic farces, peer and family pressures, sex, pregnancy, drugs, lack of economic success, and the inability of students and teachers to create a meaningful system and teachers to create a meaningful system that they can function together."
ISBN 0-8077-3004-1 $32.95 (hardback) ISBN 0-8077-3003-3 $16.95 (paperback)

8. Jones, Ken. Simulations: A Handbook For Teachers and Trainers. New York: Nichols Publishing Co., 1987.
"The curriculum has shifted from an instruction-dominated and fact-learning approach towards a greater emphasis on practical activities, oral skills, group work and interactive learning."
ISBN 0-89397-286-X: $20.95 (paperback)

9. Kidder, Tracy. Among School Children, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA, 1989. 262 pp.
Author Tracy Kidder followed teacher Chris Zajac for a year and recorded his observations etc. As cited in NEA Today, Sept. 1989, Kidder concludes that "the task for teachers isn't to do the same for each child, but to bring the same moral force to bear on all children."
ISBN 0395475910: $19.95

10. Lehr, B.J., and Hazel H. Wiggins. At Risk Low-Achieving Students in the Classroom. National Educational Association, July, 1988, 104 pp.
ISBN 0-8106-3338-8: $9.95

11. Natriello, Gary, Ed. School Dropouts-Patterns and Policies. New York and London: Teachers College Press, 1987.
Collection of articles that "cover two general aspects of the dropout phenomenon: The patterns of dropping out evident among American youth and the policies developed and implemented to reduce the incidence of dropping out."
ISBN 0-8077-2835-7: $15.95

12. Ogden, Evelyn H., and Vito Germinario. The At-Risk Student: A Practical Guide For Educators. Technomic Publishing Co., Inc., 1988, 192 pp.
"This book is based on the premise that school staff can effectively manage the negative instructional effects of many problems faced by today's students and can thereby enhance the learning of all students. Intended to cope with rather than cure the at-risk student, the book offers management methods, not therapy." Includes step-by-step procedures for 3 major grade spans: K-4, 5-8, 9-12.
Phone: 800-233-9936
ISBN 0-87762-573-5: $28.00

13. Richardson, Virginia, Ursula Casanova, Peggy Placier, and Karen Guilfoyle. School Children At Risk. The Falmer Press, 1989.
". . . describes how student categories, such as at-risk, are constructed by teachers based on their own preferences and expectations, the nature of the rest of the students in the class, and the constraints that surround them in their schools. By describing the case histories of twelve students who have been identified by their teachers as at-risk, the book provides an in-depth understanding of the circumstances in their home lives and in their schooling that led to their being classified as at-risk. Most important, it questions whether in differently organized and conceptualized settings, these children would be at-risk at all."
ISBN 1-85000-514-1: $55.00 (hardback) ISBN 1-85000-515-X: $22.00 (paperback)

14. Sartain, Harry W. Nonachieving Students At Risk: School, Family, and Community Intervention. National Education Association Professional Library, 1989.
As cited in NEA Today Oct. 1989, this publication analyzes the frustration, depression, anger and attitudes, delinquency patterns, and dropout trends that put more than one-fourth of the students in our schools at risk. It provides plans and suggestions for immediate steps to be taken with students at risk, as well as long-term prevention planning.
Available from: NEA Professional Library
P.O. Box 509
West Haven, CT 06516
Cost: $7.95

15. Sheffield, Anne and Bruce Frankel, ed. When I Was Young I Loved School, Dropping Out and Hanging In. Children's Express Foundation, Inc. 1988.
"In early 1987, thirteen teenage editors of Children's Express set out to investigate this country's dropout crisis in the only way that made any sense: to talk kid-to-kid with teenagers who had quit school, with those who had returned to give it a second chance, and with others who were fighting against all odds to hang in there." Included are their stories.
Available from: Children's Express Foundation, Inc.
245 Seventh Ave., NY, NY 10001
ISBN 0-9621641-2-7: $9.95

16. Shepard, Lorrie A. and Mary Lee Smith, Eds. Flunking Grades: Research and Policies on Retention. Falmer Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1989.
ISBN 1-85000-338-6: $39.00 ISBN 1-85000-339-4: $18.00

17. Slavin, Robert E., Nancy L. Karweit, and Nancy A. Madden. Effective Programs for Students At Risk. Allyn & Bacon, 1989.
"A practical synthesis of the latest research on what works to enhance the achievement of at-risk elementary students. The message of this book is that we know much more than we are currently using in programs for students at risk, and that while much more remains to be learned, we know how to proceed to discover how best to prevent and remediate learning deficits. This book helps to lay the empirical and intellectual groundwork for the changes that must come in programs for students at risk of school failure."
ISBN 0-205-11953-0: $33.95

18. Wehlage, Gary G., Robert A. Rutter, and Gregory A. Smith, et. al. Reducing the Risk: Schools as Communities of Support. Philadelphia, Pa.: Falmer Press, Taylor and Francis Inc., 1989.
"Studying successful programs in 14 secondary schools, the authors identify and describe drop-out prevention strategies."
ISBN 1-85000-530-3: $42.00 (hardback) ISBN 1-85000-531-1: $20.00 (paperback)

19. Weis, Lois, Eleanor Farrar, and Hugh G. Petrie, Eds. Dropouts from School: Issues, Dilemmas, and Solutions. State University of New York, 1989.
Readable volume that analyzes the problem of school dropouts most prominently from the standpoint of urban minority students, although there is also a chapter dealing with rural dropouts. Good background for drop out issues.
ISBN 0-7914-0108-1: $44.50 (hardback) ISBN 0-7914-0109-X: $16.95 (paperback)

ADDITIONAL BOOKS

CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY BOOKS

1. Christensen, C. Roland. Teaching and the Case Method. Boston: Harvard Business School, Publishing Division, 1990.
   Order No. 9-387-001: $29.95
   Phone: 617-495-6117 or 6192

2. Christensen, C. Roland. Instructor's Guide for Teaching and the Case Method. Boston: Harvard Business School, Publishing Division, 1990.
   Order No. 5-387-010: $14.95
   Phone: 617-495-6117 or 6192

3. Kowalski, Theodore J., Roy A. Weaver and Kenneth T. Henson. Case Studies on Teaching. New York and London: Longman, 1989.
   ISBN 0801302331: $17.95

4. Kowalski, Theodore J., Roy A. Weaver and Kenneth T. Henson. Instructor's Manual: Case Studies On Teaching. New York and London: Longman, 1990.
   ISBN 080130234X: Free with purchase of Case Studies on Teaching.

5. Russo, Francis X., Confronting Educational Issues, Decision Making With Case Studies. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1990. 153 p.
   ISBN 0-8403-5742-7: $20.23

6. Schulman, Judith H. and Joel A. Colbert. "Cases as Catalysts For Cases: Inducing Reflection In Teacher Education", Action In Teacher Education, vol.XI, No. 1, Spring 1989.

7. Schulman, Judith H. and Joel A. Colbert (Eds.). The Intern Teacher Casebook: Cases and Commentaries. San Francisco: Far West Laboratory For Educational Research and Development; Washington, D.C.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Education, and ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, 1988. 82 p.
   ISBN 0-86552-095-X: $8.50

8. Schulman, Judith H. and Joel A. Colbert (Eds.) 1987. The Mentor Teacher Casebook. San Francisco: Far West Laboratory For Educational Research and Development; Portland: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management,1987. 104 p.
   ISBN 0-86552-094-1: $8.00

9. Sheffield, Anne and Bruce Frankel, Ed. When I Was Young I Loved School: Dropping Out and Hanging In. Children's Express Foundation, Inc., 1988.
   ISBN 0-9621641-2-7: $9.95
   (See annotation and address under Books.)

10. Shuman, R. Baird. Classroom Encounters: Problems, Case Studies, Solutions. National Education Association, 1989.
As cited in NEA Today, Oct. 1989, "Here are over 100 real and actual situations which teachers face daily in the classroom. It goes into every aspect of school life through sections as 1) Interns and experienced teachers 2) Teachers in a new assignment/school 3) Professional reputation 4) Getting along with students, parents, and other school personnel 5) "Why didn't somebody warn me?" 6) Grades, an assessment."
Available from: NEA Professional Library
P.O. Box 509
West Haven, CT 06516
Cost: $19.95

11. Yin, Robert K. Case Study Research: Design and Methods, vol. 5, Sage Publications, Inc. 1989. 160 pp.
ISBN 0-8039-3470-X: $19.95
ISBN 0-8039-3471-8: $9.95

___ADDITIONAL CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY BOOKS

Special Issues

1. "Dealing With Diversity: At Risk Students", Educational Leadership, vol. 46 No. 5, February 1989.
   Featured articles:
   - pg.4 "What Works For Students At Risk: A Research Synthesis" by Robert Slavin and Nancy Madden
   - pg.21 "How To Get an 'A' On Your Dropout Prevention Report Card" by John V. Hamby
   - pg.29 "At-Risk Students: What Teachers and Principals Can Do" by Larry Cuban
   - pg.41 "Beyond Order and Expectations in High Schools Serving At-Risk Youth" by William A. Firestone
   - pg.49 "Can Computer-Assisted Instruction Solve the Dropout Problem?" by Beatrice Gross
   - pg.53 "Teaching Literature to At-Risk Students" by Russell Gersten and Joseph Dimino
   - pg.64 "Ambassadors: Models for At-Risk Students" by Peggy Cahoon

2. "Dropouts: How Vocational Education Helps At-Risk Youth Stay in School," Vocational Education Journal, September 1988.

3. "Special Issue: Students At Risk," Teaching Exceptional Children, Summer 1988.
   Featured articles:
   - pg. 4 "Learners At Risk" by Frank H. Wood
   - pg. 10 "Gifted Children At Risk For Learning Deficits" by Joanne Rand Whitmore
   - pg. 16 "Serving At-Risk Population in Rural America" by Doris Helge
   - pg. 29 "The Challenge of Substance Abuse" by John L. Johnson

4. "Technology And The At-Risk Student," Electronic Learning - Scholastic, Vol. 8, No. 3, Nov/Dec 1988.

Individual Articles

1. Carter, Kathy. "Meaning and Metaphor: Case Knowledge in Teaching", Theory Into Practice, Spring 1990.

2. Charlesworth, Rosalind. "'Behind' Before They Start? Deciding How To Deal With the Risk of Kindergarten 'Failure'", Young Children, March 1989.

3. Cohen, Rosetta M. "Learning from Failure: Finding the Formula for Success in One Middle School At-Risk Program". American Secondary Education, vol. 18, No. 1, 1989.

4. Gerics, Joseph, and Miriam Westheimer. "Dropout Prevention: Trinkets and Gimmicks or Deweyan Reconstructions?", Teachers College Record 90, no.1, Fall 1988, 41-60.

5. Kantrowitz, Barbara. "High School Homeroom," Newsweek Special Edition, Summer/Fall, 1990.

6. Lee, M. Linda. "Educators and Programs Reaching Out to At-Risk Youth," Media and Methods, January/February, 1990.

7. McCormick Ph.D., Roger D. "Counselors, Teachers and Kids Who Fall Through The Cracks", Reading Improvement, vol. 26, No. 2, Summer 1989.

8. Pogrow, Stanley. "Challenging At-Risk Students: Findings from the HOTS Program." Phi Delta Kappan, January, 1990.

9. Thomson, Scott. "Barriers To Learning: Does American Society Offer Incentives for Students to Excel?", Virginia Journal of Education, April 1990.

10. Wehlage, Gary G. and Robert A. Rutter. " Dropping Out: How Much Do Schools Contribute to the Problem?" Teachers College Record, No. 87, 1986, pp. 374-392.

ADDITIONAL JOURNALS

GUIDES AND REPORTS

A. **"America's Shame, America's Hope: Twelve Million Youth At Risk"**, Chapel Hill, NC: MDC, Inc., for The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, 1988.

"This report is an inquiry into the education reform movement of the 1980's with youth as the frame of reference."

Available from: MDC Inc.
1717 Legion Rd., P.O. Box 2226
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
Phone: 919-968-4531

B. **"At-Risk, Low Achieving Students in the Classroom"**, by Judy Brown Lehr and Hazel Wiggin Harris. National Education Association, 1989, 104 pp.

Practical guide for teachers working with at-risk students. Focuses on: Organization and Planning, Grouping, Cooperative Learning, Positive Discipline, Effective Teaching, Teacher Expectations.

Available from: NEA Professional Library
P.O. Box 509
West Haven, CT 06516
Cost: $9.95

C. **"At-Risk Students and Thinking: Perspectives from Research"**. Barbara Z. Presseisen, ed. National Education Association and Research for Better Schools.

"Eight leading researchers focus on ways to attack the learning problems of students at risk of school failure."

Available from: NEA Professional Library
P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516
Stock no. 1483-9-00-D
Cost: $12.95

D. **"Discipline and Guidance: A Thin Line in the Middle Level School, What At-Risk Students Say About Middle Level School Discipline and Training."** Sherrel Bergmann. National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1989.

Available from: NASSP
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
Phone: 703-860-0200
ISBN: 0-88210-225-7

E. **"Dropouts, Pushouts, and Other Casualties"**, Ed: William T. Denton. Center on Evaluation Development, Research Hot Topics Series.

Collection of 13 papers all published or presented in 1986. Section one: Defining the Dropout; Section two: Dropout Rate; Section Three: Correlates of Dropouts; Section Four: Dropout Prevention; Section Five: School Reform.

Available from: Phi Delta Kappa
Box 789
Bloomington, IN 47402
Phone: 812-339-1156

F. **"The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth In America"**, Interim Report on School-to-Work Transition, William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship, Washington D.C., 1988.

G. **"Identifying Potential Dropouts: A Compilation and Evaluation Of Selected Procedures"**.
Available from: Center on Education and Training for Employment
Publications Office, Box C
The Ohio State University
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1090
Phone: 800-848-4815 or
614-292-4353 (in Ohio)
SP700DPO4, Cost: $7.00

H. **"Keep Youth In School, A Community Based Practice Model To Keep At-Risk Youth In School"**, Final Report, Sylvia Lee, Project Director. The Catholic University of America, Nov. 1989.
Available from: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
Grant # 90-CW-0805

I. **"Proceedings of the Conference on Technology and Students At Risk of School Failure"**, June, 1987.
Available from: Agency for Instructional Technology
Box A, Bloomington, IN 47402-0120
Phone: 812-339-2203 or 800-457-4509

J. **"School College Partnerships: A Look At the Major National Models"**, Franklin P. Wilbur, Leo M. Lambert, and M. Jean Young. National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in cooperation with American Association For Higher Education, Syracuse University Project Advance, 1988.
"Describes 11 different ways that separate institutions - schools and colleges - can work together for the benefit of high school students. Useful examples of actual programs in real communities."
Available from: NASSP
1904 Association Dr.
Reston, VA 22091
Phone: 703-860-0200
ISBN 0-88210-206-0

K. **"Support Services for At-Risk Youth"**, by Marla E. Perez-Selles and Leslie F. Hergert, Ed. The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 1989.
Description of "programs that employ one of thirteen different school strategies that support and assist students at risk of failing to complete school."
Available from: The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands
290 S. Main Street
Andover, Mass 01810
Phone: 508-470-0098
No. 9507-09

L. **"Toward A State of Esteem".** The Final Report of the California Task Force To Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility, January, 1990.

This report argues that schools can have nearly as strong an impact on self esteem development as does the family. Recommends that promotion of self esteem be built into the curriculum, that opportunities be provided for students to do community service, and that counseling services be expanded. Defines self-esteem as having 4 primary ingredients: a sense of belonging, likability, a feeling of significance, and acknowledgement of hard work.

Available from: Bureau of Publications
California Dept. of Education
P.O. Box 271
Sacramento, Cal. 95802-0271
Phone: 916-445-1260; $4.00

M. **"The National Study Regarding Rural, Suburban, and Urban At-Risk Students"**, 1990.

As reported in Education Week, June 6, 1990, this "recent study indicates that rural children may be more vulnerable to many social and economic problems than are children who live in the city or suburbs."

Available from: National Rural Development Institute at Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington, 98225
Phone: (206) 676-3576

ADDITIONAL GUIDES AND REPORTS

MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES

1. FOCUS: A Dropout Prevention Database For Practitioners, Researchers and Policy makers.
   Components:
   - A. Program profile - listing of programs including
     - a. Program name
     - b. Grade level
     - c. Participant Criteria
     - d. Funding
     - e. Agencies Involved
     - f. Contact Persons
   - B. Calendar of Events includes:
     - a. Dates
     - b. Title
     - c. Location
     - d. Sponsor
     - e. Contact
     - f. Target Audience
     - g. Topic
     - h. Additional Information
   - C. Other Components to Come:
     - a. Legislative Initiatives
     - b. Contacts in Dropout Prevention
     - c. Statistics
     - d. Resource Library

   FOCUS is accessible seven days a week by utilizing a personal computer and a modem through the normal long distance telephones lines. Interested persons can call or write:

   National Dropout Prevention Center
   Clemson University
   Clemson, SC 29634-5111
   Phone: 803-656-2599, 800-443-6392
   800-868-3475 (in South Carolina)

2. VIDEOTAPES:

   A. Students At Risk: Three Part Videotape Series by Mildred Odom Bradley, 1990.

   1. Tape 1: "Teaching Strategies For Students Who Have Low Motivation To Learn"
   2. Tape 2: "Teaching Strategies For Students With Poor Work Habits, Poor Study Skills, And A Poor Testing History"
   3. Tape 3: "Teaching Strategies For Students With Language Deficits"

   Available from: The Master Teacher
   Leadership Lane, P.O. Box 1207
   Manhattan, Kansas 66502
   Phone: (913) 539-0555
   (913) 539-7739
   Cost: $379.00 (series of three), $129.95 (each)

B. Inservice Video Network, NASSP Special Projects, 3 Regent Street, Suite 305, Livingston, New Jersey 07039, Phone: 201-992-9081.
NASSP's Inservice Video Network offers more than 40 titles - excellent for use by individuals or with groups.
Selected Titles:
(702) "A Successful Approach to Attacking Truancy"
(804) "Children of Divorce: How Education Can Help"
(851SR) "A Student at Risk"

3. A COMPLETE TEACHER INSERVICE PROGRAM

"Catch Your Falling S.T.A.R.S.: Strategies For Teaching At Risk Students"
Universal Dimensions, Inc.
930 Pitner Ave.
Evanston, IL 60202
Phone: 800-323-5448
Cost: $975.00

"This comprehensive video/print workshop presents effective teaching practices that research supports as appropriate for students considered "At Risk." This training program is suitable for elementary, middle, and secondary school educators. It has been developed with the assumption that a student may become "At Risk" in the earlier grades as easily as the later grades."
Part 1: Defining "At Risk" Conditions Needed to Support "At Risk" Students
Part 2: Norms that Affect Students "At Risk"
Part 3: Cooperative Learning-Productivity and Growth for All
Part 4: Examining Educational Assumptions Related to Teaching and Learning
Part 5: Success or Failure: Building Self-Esteem
Part 6: Recognition, Reinforcements and Rewards

4. NATIONAL DROPOUT PREVENTION CENTERS

A. Clemson University
393 College Ave.
Clemson, SC 29634-5111
Asst. Director: John Hamby
Phone: 803-656-2599

B. Center For Research on Elementary and Middle Schools
John Hopkins University
3505 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
Director: Robert E. Slavin
Phone: 301-338-7570

C. Wisconsin Center For Educational Research
1025 W. Johnson St.
Madison, WI 53706
Director: Fred M. Newmann
Phone: 608-263-7575

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

MODEL PROGRAMS

Collaborations between colleges/universities and public school systems is proving to benefit both preservice teachers and at-risk students. Following is a brief description of some collaborations in Virginia. Names and phone numbers are included for more information.

MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE
Staunton, Virginia

Students at Mary Baldwin College volunteer as tutors/mentors for elementary and high school students in the Staunton City School District. At Lee High School, the volunteers spend 2 hours a week with potential drop-out students. At Bessie Weller Elementary School, college students volunteer in the classrooms giving selected children individual attention. On Mary Baldwin campus, in Riddle House, the headquarters for the Teacher Education Dept., Monday through Thursday, local students come to be tutored: Elem. level - 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.; High School level -7:00 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, contact Genie Addleton (703) 887-7009.

EASTERN MENNONITE COLLEGE/BROADWAY HIGH SCHOOL
Harrisonburg, Virginia

Eastern Mennonite College and Broadway High School, one of three high schools in Rockingham County, Virginia, collaborate to conduct a preservice teacher-training program designed to provide assistance to high school students considered to be at-risk for dropping out of school. Project goals are twofold: 1) to train preservice teachers to work with at-risk students and 2) to reduce the dropout rate at Broadway High School. Approximately 60 preservice teachers and as many at-risk students have been involved in the 3 year old program. For more information, contact: Dr. Donovan Steiner (703) 432-4142.

VIRGINIA WORKSTUDY PROGRAM

Students from Virginia colleges and universities can serve as aides, mentors, laboratory assistants and tutors at all grade levels in Virginia public schools. Public schools contribute 30% and participating colleges or universities contribute 70% of wages in the work study program. Resources are provided by Virginia Workstudy program funds, a state plan for subsidizing employment of college students. For more information, contact:

STAUNTON CITY SCHOOLS
Staunton, Virginia

PULSAR is designed to alter school and community interactions with the at-risk student. The program includes using police, educators, and peers as mentors and positive role models, implementing a directed program of self-esteem development, providing employment opportunities and alternative community activities for young people, and offering an academic tutorial program and a counseling component for students and their families. The program has earned the support of the Staunton community, local governmental agencies, the juvenile court system, and the participants themselves. Statistics indicating the program's success show a drop-out rate for participants of only one half of the area's average rate, and no arrests of

participants since the inception of the program. PULSAR has received a certificate of excellence from the Staunton City Schools and was cited as a major factor in the presentation of the state's Community Crime Prevention Award this year to the Staunton Police Department.

In the PULSAR program, identified at-risk students are invited to participate in a three day retreat at a campsite located away from the school area. At camp, students are divided into small groups, each of which is led by a team of teachers, counselors, policemen, and peer counselors. The emphasis of the activities is on self assessment, building of self esteem, values clarification, and relationship building and bonding among the group. The positive bonds which are developed on this retreat are carried back to the school environment where the same adults are available for tutoring, counseling, and just listening. In addition, the students are also linked to the peer counseling network and to the peer counseling coordinator, who is also available for in-depth counseling and family intervention. Police officers play a vital role in this program, as their influence reaches beyond the school and into the community; they are able to interact with young people in ways that educators cannot.

The at-risk student and his family are thus surrounded by a safety network of caring peers and professionals which relieves feelings of isolation and helplessness and can diffuse many problems before they start.

Employment opportunities are another part of the PULSAR program, as young people are helped in the job search process, coached on interview and employment skills, and guided to area employers who are backing the program. Employment helps to relieve economic stresses on some families of at-risk students, and also helps the student himself feel productive and worthwhile.

The last component of PULSAR involves a community youth organization which provides alternative activities for young people. Students have the opportunity to work alongside the police on community projects and to raise funds to attend such activities and positive programs as the CADRE and PRIDE conferences.

Initial funding of the PULSAR program was provided by a grant from the Governor's Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Problems. After seeing the initial success and potential of PULSAR, many local businesses, civic clubs, agencies, and private citizens have made donations to continue the program for at-risk students. The funds are used for training the teachers, policemen, and peer counselors, for providing the retreat facilities and transportation, for purchasing materials and supplies, and for giving stipends for tutors.

The PULSAR program is successful in changing student-school-community interactions with positive bonding and programs that work.

Contact Mr. Charles P. Rembold, Principal of Robert E. Lee High School or Ms. Jean Martino for more information phone: 703-885-5153.

NOTES